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Title: Charger of the Fallen

Author: Fylwyn  
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I don't hold with  
the overblown, self  
congratulatory  
boasting of  
adventurers. I find  
them lacking the facts,  
the substance, that  
prove a compelling read.

So why, you might ask  
gentile reader, have I  
rendered my thoughts  
in this same medium?  
Having expressed my  
disdain for the dubious  
tales of others, this  
must seem hypocritical  
or self indulgent.

I have little defence,  
save that posterity  
must have a record of  
this discovery and I  
am the only one who has  
the knowledge, and can  
tell the tale. As I am  
a retiring person, not  
prone to boisterous  
revels or even the  
presence of others save  
the closest of friends,  
I set out alone. I had  
no particular destination  
in mind and it was after  
weeks of wandering that  
I encountered the most  
marvelous sight.

You must understand,  
I was in a mountainous  
area, surrounded on all  
sides by majestic snow  
capped peaks. The air was  
crisp and refreshing and  
a pleasant stream bubbled  
past. I decided to refill  
my drinking skins from  
the cool water flowing  
by, and it was then that

I made my first startling  
discovery. The water was  
black!

No, I know what you're  
thinking, the water must  
have been very deep, or  
the stones themselves  
black. But this was no  
illusion, the water was  
no deeper than a foot  
and the liquid a silky  
black color quite unlike  
the normal clarity one  
sees. I was mystified, of  
course. What could cause  
one of the most basic  
elements of life to  
change in such a manner?  
What might this portend?

As I mused over the  
implications, I was  
startled from my reverie  
by a noise, not unlike  
the snorting of a bull.  
Imagine my amazement  
when i turned to see  
what might have crept  
upon me and beheld a  
jet steed of such noble  
proportions that i felt  
I must be gazing upon  
the paragon of horses.  
From the proud arch of  
the neck to the powerful  
of muscles just under  
the skin, this equine  
shown with unmistakable  
magic. Unconcerned with  
my presence, the lordly  
creature drank calmly  
from the strange water.  
With each gulp of liquid,  
the stallion's coat  
dulled and became  
thicker, coarser.  
The glorious cascade of  
mane darkened till even  
the word pitch cannot  
describe the utter  
absence of color.  
I was witnessing a  
transformation that I  
feared harmed this  
this magnificent beast,  
and so I took the only  
action that seemed

reasonable at the time.

I yelled, I screamed,  
I shouted... I shoved  
against the creatures  
mighty body trying to  
force it away from the  
tainted water. But, alas,  
to no avail. Once, the  
equine turned and gazed  
upon me with bright,  
intellegent eyes, before  
returning to quench its  
mighty thirst. In horror,  
I stood transfixed as  
the final  
metamorphosis took place.  
And then, abruptly, I  
knew nothing more.

I Awoke, bound roughly  
and lying on my side.  
I was clearly the cause  
of an arguement between  
several people, who  
could only be my captors.  
My head pounding and the  
blood thrumming painfully  
in my bound limbs.  
I strained to hear the  
conversation. I  
overheard just enough  
to become very afraid.  
For you see, gentle  
readers, these people  
who call themselves  
the Cult of the Fallen  
are servents of Mondain.  
Though dead, the  
legacy of the wizard  
lives on in the minds of  
his followers. They  
work for vengeance alone,  
for the corruption of  
Sosaria and the  
destruction of all who  
stand against them.

I escaped, as you  
surely have devined, for  
how else could i give  
warning? The story of my  
flight is not important  
and so i will not waste